

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Hubbard Hall

Connecticut State Technology Extension Program

Hubbard Hall

Client Profile:

Hubbard Hall, founded in 1849, is a specialty chemical manufacturer and general chemical distributor based in Waterbury, Connecticut. Hubbard Hall employs 100 employees in two manufacturing plants and two distribution centers. The company has thrived with six generations of family owners.

Situation:

Since 2002, Hubbard Hall had an ongoing relationship with the Connecticut State Technology Extension Program (CONNSTEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate. It began with Lean Awareness training, followed by the creation of a Value Stream Map (VSM) for the Tank Farm's chemical process. The VSM process included both Current and Future State Maps, and the lessons learned were applied to all Tank Farm products. Connecticut Light and Power's (CL&P) PRIME program financed a major portion of the VSM project. By implementing CONNSTEP's recommendations, Hubbard Hall experienced improvement of on-time delivery to the warehouse from 25 to 90 percent. Based on these results, Hubbard Hall's Operation Manager, Jim Benning, extended the Continuous Improvement activities to other areas in the company.

Hubbard Hall's business volume increased significantly in 2003. The company was challenged to improve operating effectiveness without adding space or manpower. Once again, Hubbard Hall brought in CONNSTEP to help it through the transformation process.

Solution:

CONNSTEP identified Lean Manufacturing's 5S approach as the best process to properly utilize Hubbard Hall's existing resources. It was determined that the North East Utilities Process Reengineering for Increased Manufacturing Efficiency program (NU PRIME) would provide 100 percent financing for a 3.5 day Kaizen Event. In May 2004 CONNSTEP trained Hubbard Hall's operation manager and shop employees on the 5S approach. Spaghetti diagrams of the product flow and photographs of the shop floor were documented. A brainstorming session was held to solicit and prioritize ideas to improve product flow. CONNSTEP facilitated a list of priority action items which were immediately assigned to team members and implemented. One of the most dramatic changes was the creation of a transit zone, an area designed with shipping racks for specific shipping companies. Large numbers of products were no longer being stacked in various open spaces and shipping workers no longer needed to run about the plant to fulfill a customer's order.

By implementing the 5S approach of Lean Manufacturing, Hubbard Hall was able to dramatically reduce shipping time and increase existing product flow. The company was also able to meet increased business volume. Hubbard Hall's increased production capacity makes the company more attractive to clients. Hubbard Hall also benefited from the positive impact to employer/teamster relations.

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Results:

- * Increased throughput by 20 percent.
- * Reduced shipping time.
- * Increased production capacity.
- * Retention of jobs.
- * Improved floor space utilization.
- * Improved employer/teamster relations.
- * Improved safety conditions.

Testimonial:

"By implementing lean for specific tasks we've created a stronger bond between management and labor which has improved overall performance, efficiency, lowered cost, and retain all company positions. It has created a foundation for problem solving that we've been able to systemize into other areas of our business. The exercise that CONNSTEP led us through has created a bond that we've never had between management and labor which continues to pay dividends far beyond the initial issue. The opportunities are limitless for lean in our organization."

Andrew Skipp, President